



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS State Board of Retirement

ONE ASHBURTON PLACE, BOSTON, MA 02108-1607

N E W S L E T T E R



Timothy P. Cahill

Welcome to the Summer 2008 edition of the **Active Member Newsletter**

As residents of the Commonwealth we are fortunate to enjoy a wide variety of natural resources and diverse public events during these warm months. Massachusetts in the summertime is one of the best places to be.

As state employees, we are also fortunate to be members of a retirement system that takes into account the years of service that we give to the state.

This newsletter's goal is to provide you with a greater understanding of those retirement benefits.

Whether you plan to retire in 20 years or 2 years - the time to think about retirement is now.

In this issue we provide an explanation of Option C, one of the survivor options available to you at retirement. You will also get some guidance on handling your annuity account if you leave state service, as well as an update on the Pension Fund.

Should you have any questions, suggestions or contributions for future newsletters, please do not hesitate to contact the State Board of Retirement.

On behalf of the State Board of Retirement, thank you for your service to the Commonwealth. Have a great summer.

Timothy P. Cahill
Treasurer and Receiver General
The Commonwealth of Massachusetts



STATE BOARD OF RETIREMENT

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

Chairman

Treasurer Timothy P. Cahill

Elected Members

Ralph White

Theresa McGoldrick, Esq.

Appointed Member

Peter Koutoujian, Sr.

Chosen Member

Chris S. Condon

Executive Director

Nicola Favorito, Esq.

MAIN OFFICE

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Springfield, MA 01103

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Fax: (413) 730-6139

PHONE TOLL-FREE

1-800-392-6014 (Mass. only)

Automated Phone Options

Retirement Counselor 1
Disability 2
Survivor Benefits 5
Buyback 6
Withdrawal/Refund 7
Direct Deposit 8

EMAIL

SRB@tre.state.ma.us

WEB SITE

www.mass.gov/retirement

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Our Website has a New Look



State Treasury gets an Update

The Massachusetts State Treasury along with the State Board of

Retirement recently updated its web site under the *Mass.Gov* portal so that our members can access information more easily.

Our website now has more information on retirement, while still offering you the most demanded pages from before such as the retirement forms and the pension calculator.

One of the newest features includes an RSS feed that you can subscribe to. With an RSS feed (which stands for "Really Simple Syndication") you can sign up to receive an email whenever the news and information section of the website is updated.

Another new feature is separate sections for employees, retirees, and employers. Links to related web sites are also provided for your convenience. The information you are looking for could now be no more than just a few clicks away.

SUGGESTIONS WELCOME!

The website can be found at www.mass.gov/retirement. Take a look around and let us know what you think. Suggestions are always welcome. Please send your comments and suggestions to ndunker@tre.state.ma.us ■

Reminders

Please notify your Human Resources coordinator of any change of address.

Important Dates to Remember:

July

Thursday, July 31 | Board Meeting

August

Thursday, August 28 | Board Meeting

September

Monday, September 1 | Labor Day, offices closed

Thursday, September 25 | Board Meeting



Look for this icon on our website to calculate an estimate of your pension benefits

Have a Safe Summer!

Meet our Staff

Senior retirement counselor Kevin Caira was recently honored with the **Cavaliere Award** by the Italian government.

Kevin is immediate past state president of the Massachusetts Sons of Italy. He received the honor for his contributions promoting Italian culture outside of Italy.

Kevin is the senior retirement counselor for the State Board of Retirement. He has been with the Board since 1992 and has helped countless members retire from state service.



Bravo Kevin!

PRIM Board Update: May 2008

The Pension Reserves Investment Trust (PRIT) Fund is a pooled investment fund established to invest the assets of the Massachusetts State Teachers' and Employees' Retirement Systems, and the assets of county, authority, district, and municipal retirement systems that choose to invest in the Fund. The PRIT Fund was created by the Legislature in December 1983. The nine-member PRIM Board is responsible for the management of the PRIT Fund. The Treasurer and Receiver General of the Commonwealth is a member ex officio and serves as the chair. The State Employees' Retirement System also has two representatives on the Board: the members of that Retirement System elect one and one is an Elected Member of the State Employees' Retirement Board.

***Pension Reserves Investment Trust (PRIT) FUND ASSETS:**
\$52,256,058,000

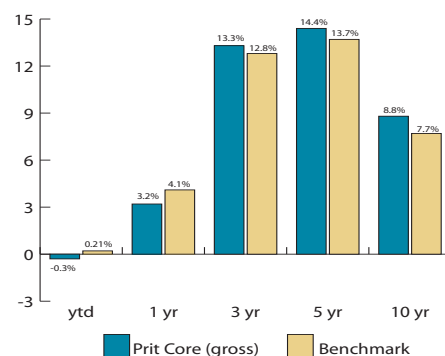
***State Employees' Retirement System (SERS) ASSETS:**
\$22,092,952,843

To get more detailed information on the Pension Reserves Investment Management (PRIM) Board you can always go to the PRIM website to view their complete quarterly updates at www.mapension.com.

Due to limited space, we can only provide a condensed version of their fund updates. (The TUCS ranking and the PRIT Core Fund graph represent two different time frames.)

*As of 5/31/2008

PRIT Core Fund as of 5/31/08



The TUCS Rankings for the 1st Quarter 2008 (ended 3/31/08) show the PRIT Core Fund ranked in the Top 1% of Public Funds Nationwide (over \$1 billion in size) with an 8.34% annualized return over 10 years. For the recent year PRIM placed in the 16th percentile with a return of 3.57%. For the 3-year period PRIM placed in the 5th percentile (12.01%) & 5-years in 1st percentile (15.67%).

For more information about the PRIM Board, please visit their website at www.mapension.com ■

Springfield Regional Office Celebrates 2nd Anniversary



Springfield Staff: (l-r) Michael Southerland, Regional Office Manager & Declan Hobbs, Retirement Counselor

The Springfield Regional Office is celebrating its second anniversary this month. Located in the State Office Building in Springfield, the office opened July 2006 to serve members in the western and central parts of the state.

As of June 2008 the office has fielded over 11,350 calls and welcomed over 1720 walk-ins. Business hours are Monday through Friday, 8:00

a.m. to 5:00 p.m. with a SMART Plan office open on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.

The Springfield office was opened as a result of Treasurer Cahill and the Board's commitment to offer the best possible and most accessible service to members of the State Employees' Retirement System.

Springfield Office Contact Information

436 Dwight Street, Room 109A
Springfield, MA

Telephone: 413-730-6135

Board Staff:

Michael Southerland, extension 257

Declan Hobbs extension 258.

As always, walk-in appointments are also available at our Boston office from 8:00-5:00, Monday through Friday. ■

Understanding Your Benefits: *Option C*

When you retire from service under Chapter 32, you are given a choice of three retirement options - A, B, or C.

Option A gives you the highest pension amount, based on your service, age and salary average. Your beneficiary receives a prorated amount of your last month's check up to your date of death.

Option B is slightly lower than Option A, offering any remaining balance of your annuity account to your beneficiary(ies) plus the prorated balance of one month's check.

Option C is the lowest monthly benefit for you but it also offers a monthly benefit for your eligible beneficiary when you pass away. An eligible beneficiary under Option C is a current spouse, unmarried former spouse, child, sibling, or parent. Upon your death, your beneficiary will be eligible for a pension for life.

If you select Option C as your retirement option, there are a few

points to keep in mind. First, if your beneficiary passes away before you do, please contact the Board to let us know to update your pension. Your pension benefit will "pop up" to option A and you will begin receiving the higher pension amount based on your individual retirement calculation.

If both you and your spouse are state employees you can both choose to retire under Option C and name each other as beneficiaries. If one of you passes away let our Survivor Benefits Department know about both retirement cases so that we can adjust each one accurately.

Also, while it is important to inform other agencies, such as the Group Insurance Commission, of a death, the Board must also be informed. We cannot adjust your account until we receive the death certificate.

We understand that dealing with the death of a loved one can be difficult. Knowing what to do ahead of time can help ease some of the stress. ■

Don't Let Your Money Go Unclaimed



If you leave state service and leave your annuity on account with us, it's important to keep your information up to date.

We have a long list of members who left their money on account with us when they left state service and have since passed away. Unfortunately, we have been unable to locate their beneficiaries because the information we have on file is either outdated or not completely filled out.

Tell your loved ones about your account and what to do if you should pass away. In the event of your death your loved ones should:

1. Call the Board to let us know
2. Send a copy of the Death Certificate to the Board.

For a list of members whose beneficiaries we are searching for, log on to our website at www.mass.gov/retirement. ■

Options at a Glance

Option	For You	When You Pass Away, Your Beneficiaries Receive	Eligible Beneficiaries	Health Insurance For Beneficiaries*
A	Highest monthly benefit	Balance of one month's check prorated to date of death	Anyone	For Spouses only
B	Slightly lower monthly benefit	Remaining balance of your annuity account (if any), plus balance of one month's check		Eligible for life regardless of option
C	Lowest monthly benefit	Monthly pension for life (2/3 of your full pension)	Only one person can be named, either parent, child, sister, brother, spouse or unmarried former spouse	Dependent children are eligible until age 19 (contact GIC for information on exceptions for full time students and other dependents)
D	This option is activated only if you pass away while still employed	Full option C pension for life calculated as if you retired on the date of your death & attained age 55		

*Contact the Group Insurance Commission for more information on Health Insurance after retirement